

Arkema Summary - 1300 hrs - 3 September 2017

The Arkema plant continues to be under close observation. Overnight, smoke and ash were observed as well as a strong sweet, detergent-like odor. The organic peroxides in the trailers are known to have a strong odor associated with them. Each of the trailers contain approximately 38,000 lbs and is venting. There are small fires and vaporization occurring which may explain reports of an orange glow.

Complaints were called in from outside the perimeter and these were consistent with the wind direction at the time of the complaint. EPA dispatched a team to conduct air monitoring. No elevated readings were detected and no adverse effects were reported, only odor.

The list of decomposing products are not considered toxic, however, they have a low odor threshold resulting in the complaints.

The temperature of the contents is critical to estimating the moment of ignition. Because this information is not considered accurate and verifiable, specific information is not being disseminated.

Access to the facility remains unsafe and therefore, the 1.5-mile radius evacuation is still in effect. Plans for manual ignition are on hold at this time.

EPA will continue to maintain a rotational 24-hrs presence and air monitoring capabilities at the incident command operations center.

ASPECT

ASPECT testing confirmed smoke and evaluated a chemical release sweep directly over the trailers. Many chemical detections were consistent with light hydrocarbons (e.g., 1,3-butadiene) caused by the heated constituents emitted from the trailers. These hydrocarbons were all measured slightly above the limit of detection (about 5 ppm). Other downwind passes (50 m to 100 m) did not show chemical detections above the detection limits.

Recent flyover photos indicate that flood waters within the facility have receded almost completely.

As of this morning, ASPECT flew over the Arkema site and detected very low levels of periodic emissions, most likely residual from last night.